VANCOUVER, BC--(Marketwired - January 17, 2017) - Imperial Metals Corp. (the "Company") (TSX: III) reports its 2016 base and precious metals production from all operations totaled 119.17 million pounds copper, 94.93 thousand ounces gold and 330.96 thousand ounces silver, up from the 88.13 million pounds copper, 44.71 thousand ounces gold and 224.53 thousand ounces silver produced in 2015. Production in 2016 includes the first full year of Red Chris operations, production at Mount Polley (six months were modified mill operations), and Imperial's 50% allocation from eight months production at Huckleberry.

Red Chris Mine

In the 2016 fourth quarter Red Chris copper production was 14.66 million pounds copper and 4.66 thousand ounces gold, compared to 20.38 million pounds copper and 10.03 thousand ounces gold in the 2015 fourth quarter. All ore was mined from the Main zone pit, with average grades of 0.382% copper and 0.193 g/t gold compared to 2015 fourth quarter average grades of 0.502% copper and 0.298 g/t gold when approximately 25% of the mill feed came from the higher grade East zone pit. During the 2016 fourth quarter, milling rates were hampered due to a reclaim barge relocation in October which resulted in approximately 72 hours downtime, and the failure of a SAG mill pinion in December which resulted in approximately 120 hours downtime. In the 2016 fourth quarter the mill achieved an average throughput of 24,904 tonnes per day compared to 27,174 tonnes per day in the 2015 fourth quarter. The resulting annual copper production of 83.61 million pounds was 1.6% less than the low end of the 2016 guidance (3Q2016 update), while gold production of 47.09 thousand ounces was about the midpoint of the targeted 45-50 thousand ounces.

Metallurgical performance in the plant is improving with the implementation of a new reagent and reagent addition scheme. Recovery has averaged over 81% for the first ten days of January 2017. Work on installation of another rougher flotation cell is underway, and is now targeted for completion by the end of the first quarter in 2017. Also, in order to further increase mill operating time, a bypass conveyor is being installed to allow the plant to continue operating when the high angle conveyor that recirculates pebbles to the SAG mill is down.

Red Chris Mine Production	3 Months Ended December 31		Year Ended December 31	
	2016	2015	2016	2015[1]
Ore milled - *tonnes*	2,291,150	2,500,016	9,651,738	8,171,879
Ore milled per calendar day - *tonnes*	24,904	27,174	26,371	25,698
Grade % - copper	0.382	0.502	0.507	0.477
Grade g/t - gold	0.193	0.298	0.309	0.261
Recovery % - copper	75.96	73.70	77.52	68.09
Recovery % - gold	32.83	41.78	49.04	37.91
Copper - *000's pounds*	14,659	20,385	83,614	58,486
Gold - *ounces*	4,661	10,025	47,088	25,949
Silver - *ounces*	25,918	33,986	190,624	95,232

[1] production stated from February 17 to December 31, 2015

Red Chris 2017 production target is 85-92 million pounds copper and 40-45 thousand ounces gold. Production will be weighted to the second half of the year as grades are expected to be slightly under 0.4% copper for the first six months compared to slightly over 0.5% copper for the second half of 2017.

Mount Polley Mine

During the 2016 fourth quarter 1,632,355 tonnes ore were treated, producing 4.98 million pounds copper and 11.29 thousand ounces gold compared to 1,185,419 tonnes ore treated, producing 5.10 million pounds copper and 10.43 thousand ounces gold in the 2015 fourth quarter. Operations in the 2016 fourth quarter were impacted by a period of very cold weather which reduced water supply, and the failure of a ball mill motor which reduced the tonnage treated. As a result, annual copper production was 25.34 million pounds and annual gold production was 46.44 thousand ounces, respectively 93.8% and 96.9% of the low end of the 2016 guidance target.

The Boundary zone underground production for the 2016 fourth quarter totaled about 40,000 tonnes grading 1.24% copper and 0.72 g/t gold. A total of about 500,000 tonnes grading 1.22% copper and 0.78 g/t gold has been mined from this zone.

A 5,000 metre underground drilling program is currently underway targeting the Martel zone, located underneath the Wight pit, from the drill drift located about 100 metres to the west of the zone. The goal of the program is to confirm a higher grade mineable block within the previously defined resource of 6.26 million tonnes grading 1.17% copper and 0.40 g/t gold.

Mount Polley Mine Production	3 Months Ended December 31		Year Ended December 31	
	2016	2015	2016	2015[1]
Ore milled - *tonnes*	1,632,355	1,185,419	6,684,824	1,781,799
Ore milled per calendar day - *tonnes*	17,743	12,885	18,265	11,958

Grade % - copper	0.208	0.286	0.247	0.293
Grade g/t - gold	0.326	0.382	0.310	0.368
Recovery % - copper	66.60	68.24	69.66	69.64
Recovery % - gold	66.00	71.60	69.78	72.11
Copper - *000's pounds*	4,977	5,098	25,339	8,007
Gold - *ounces*	11,291	10,430	46,444	15,190
Silver - *ounces*	11,237	14,054	90,125	25,911

(1) production stated from August 5 to December 31, 2015

The 2017 production target for Mount Polley is 26-29 million pounds copper and 55-60 thousand ounces gold. All 2017 production is expected to come from open pit operations.

About Imperial

Imperial is a Vancouver based exploration, mine development and operating company. The Company, through its subsidiaries, owns the Red Chris and Mount Polley copper/gold mines in British Columbia, and the Sterling gold mine in Nevada. Imperial also holds a 50% interest in Huckleberry Mines Ltd. and in the Ruddock Creek lead/zinc property, both in British Columbia.

Forward-Looking Information and Risks Notice

Forward-looking statements relate to future events or future performance and reflect Company management's expectations or beliefs regarding future events and include, but are not limited to, specific statements regarding the expected improvement of metallurgical performance of the Red Chris plant with the implementation of a new reagent and reagent addition scheme, and the installation of an additional rougher flotation cell; expectations that the installation of a bypass conveyor will increase mill operating time at the Red Chris mine; the 2017 production targets for the Red Chris and Mount Polley mines; expectations regarding a 5,000 metre underground drilling program targeting the Mount Polley mine's Martel zone located underneath the Wight Pit; and in general, statements with respect to the estimation of mineral reserves and mineral resources, the conversion of mineral resources to mineral reserves, the realization of mineral reserve estimates, the timing and amount of estimated future production, costs of production, capital expenditures, and success of mining operations. In certain cases, forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of words such as "plans", "expects" or "does not expect", "is expected", "outlook", "budget", "scheduled", "estimates", "forecasts", "intends", "anticipates" or "does not anticipate", or "believes", or variations of such words and phrases or statements that certain actions, events or results "may", "could", "would", "might" or "will be taken", "occur" or "be achieved" or the negative of these terms or comparable terminology. In this document certain forward-looking statements are identified by words including "guidance", "expectations", "targeted", "plan", "planned", "estimated", "calls for" and "expected". By their very nature forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of the Company to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. Such factors include, among others, risks related to changes in project parameters as plans continue to be refined; future prices of mineral resources; possible variations in ore reserves, grade or recovery rates; accidents; dependence on key personnel; labour pool constraints; labour disputes; availability of infrastructure required for the development of mining projects; delays in obtaining governmental approvals or financing or in the completion of development or construction activities; counterparty risks associated with sales of our metals; changes in general economic conditions; increased operating and capital costs; and other risks of the mining industry as well as those factors detailed from time to time in the Company's interim and annual financial statements and management's discussion and analysis of those statements, all of which are filed and available for review at imperialmetals.com and sedar.com. Although the Company has attempted to identify important factors that could cause actual actions, events or results to differ materially from those described in forward-looking statements, there may be other factors that cause actions, events or results not to be as anticipated, estimated or intended. There can be no assurance that forward-looking statements will prove to be accurate, as actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in such statements. Accordingly, readers should not place undue reliance on forward looking statements.

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